

of view also they can take their place side by side with their women colleagues.

When we in this country can produce male nurses who are certificated graduates of our recognised training schools we shall then be in a position to judge between the qualifications of the male and female nurse. Meanwhile let us bear in mind that the *Maine* now, as heretofore, will be nursed by competent nurses of proved ability. We need not grudge them their work, nor do we believe that nursing will ever to any great extent pass out of the hands of women into those of men, for while many women are suited for the work, comparatively few men are attracted to its ranks, and of these a large number are found to be unsuited. There can be no doubt that the profession of nursing will remain largely, though not exclusively, in the hands of women.

One point with regard to the *Maine* will, we hope, be insisted upon, namely, that a trained nurse is appointed as Superintendent of Nursing. The experiment of organising the nursing of a hospital without such an officer has been tried many times, and as often as it has been tried has been proved a failure.

### Annotations.

#### THE PLAGUE AT PORT SAID.

THE news that bubonic plague has appeared at Port Said, deaths having already occurred from it, is extremely grave. Port Said has been well described as the Clapham Junction of the East, and all ships passing through the Red Sea, whether outward or homeward bound, touch at this port as a rule, and usually coal there. There is also considerable traffic with Turkey and Greece, and Asia Minor, as well as with Italy. It will be seen, therefore, that if the outbreak assumes serious proportions that from no place in the world could infection be conveyed with equal facility, all over the globe. The population of Port Said is cosmopolitan, and representatives of every nation in the world are probably to be found there. Many of them are not representatives of the highest type either, and are of a class amongst whom it would be difficult to enforce strict sanitary and hygienic precautions. The sanitary experts, Doctors Bitter and Graham, have arrived, and have made a bacteriological examination. Meanwhile the ships in the harbour are kept in strict quarantine, a wise and necessary precaution, in the interests of the whole world.

#### CARELESS NURSING.

Mr. W. L. Brodie Hall, writing to the *Eastbourne Chronicle*, asserts that matters at the Princess Alice Hospital, Eastbourne, require investigation, and states that since he has given publicity to his belief that he has been repeatedly supplied with cases that require to be investigated. He has declined to relieve such persons of their obvious duty, and has recommended them to send their "cases" to the committee of the institution. He, however, gives an extract from one letter, with the writer of which he is acquainted, and who he states to be an old resident, incapable of animus or unkindly feeling toward the hospital or any other philanthropic institution:—

#### EXTRACT FROM LETTER.

"I feel sure some investigation should be made as to matters at the Princess Alice Hospital. I should like to state a fact which has come under my own notice. My nice parlourmaid went to the hospital for an operation for the removal of varicose veins. The surgeon told me she would require to be there three weeks. The operation was most successfully performed. But when under ether a hot bottle was applied to her foot and left there for two and a half hours. The first conscious feeling the poor girl had was that she was burning, and when she said this and the foot was examined it was indeed true. To be brief, the foot was so injured that another operation had to be performed to remove some bone which became diseased through the burning, and she was over eight weeks in the hospital and for three months incapacitated for work. When visiting my servant I saw at the hospital another young woman whom I knew who had an exactly similar experience. Her foot was so burned that she was there for weeks beyond what was expected, and spoke to me of it with tears in her eyes. I must add that both in writing to me and in speaking to my maid herself, the hospital matron made very light of the 'accident,' as she called it. I suppose the nurses always shield one another."

That such "accidents" should occur indicates that in these instances at least the nursing was extremely careless. Hot water bottles should invariably be placed in flannel covers, and if this is done there is no danger of injury to the patient by burning. The blame for such indefensible carelessness should be brought home to the person responsible, who should be—surely she has been—severely reprimanded. The only course open to the authorities when such occurrences take place appears to us to be to acknowledge with regret the carelessness which occasioned them, and to take steps to prevent the possibility of such disasters in the future.

If it be true that two patients in the same ward suffered in this way the standard of nursing enforced in this institution would seem to leave much to be desired.

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